

The Hwang reference discloses an electrical connector having a guide element (guiding rod – 24) and a recess (receiving passage – 14) for receiving the guide element. However, the Hwang reference does not disclose an electrical connector in which the recess is set apart from the guide element in an inserted state.

In the rejection of Claim 1, the Office Action has identified guide rod (24) in the Hwang reference as being a guide element and receiving passage (14) as being a recess. However, referring to Figure 4 of the Hwang reference, when the first connector (20) is inserted into and mated to the second connector (10), the guiding rod remains within the receiving passage. Since the guiding rod is not set apart from the receiving passage in an inserted state, this disclosure of Hwang does not meet the limitations of Claim 1.

In response to the Applicants arguments regarding the Hwang reference, the Office Action states:

Applicant's arguments filed on 09/30/2002 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicants argue that Hwang's statement (col. 2, lines 46-48) used by Examiner to reject the limitation "the recess is set apart from the guide element" is simply incoherent and ambiguous. According to Applicants, another Hwang statement (col. 1, ll. 46-53) better describe the Hwang's invention and does not reject the above mentioned limitation.

However, both statements of Hwang suggest the same - the designed movement of the connectors in a direction perpendicular to a mating direction. According to Hwang, that movement is possible due to differences in diameter of the recess and the guiding member. Hence, Hwang meets the claim's limitation.

The assertion that "movement is possible due to differences in diameter of the recess and the guiding member" is inconsistent with the Examiner's rejection of Claim 1. Instead, this assertion appears to be based on treating the mounting pin (32) of the Hwang reference as being the guiding element and the lug (31) as being the recess. However, reading the Hwang reference in this manner as suggested by the Examiner does not disclose the limitations of Claim 1, for at least the following reasons.

First, the mounting pin (32) and lug (31) do not form a connector. The mounting pin is fixed into mounting hole 41 of the first substrate 40. Thus, the two parts of this connection are the mounting pin and the first substrate. The lug is pinned in place by the mounting pin and is able to move due to the differences in the diameter of the lug and the mounting pin. However, the connection between the mounting pin and the first substrate is

independent of the lug or the first connector. Thus, the lug is neither a recess nor a connector.

Second, the mounting pin, lug, and mounting hole form a mechanical junction, not an electrical connection. Since there is no electrical connection, these components of Hwang do not form an electrical connector as is recited in Claim 1.

Third, when the mounting pin is connected to the first substrate, it is fixed within the recess of the mounting hole and through the hole of the lug. Therefore, the mounting pin is not set apart from either the lug or the mounting hole when the mounting pin is inserted into the mounting hole.

Fourth, the first connector does not have a guide element, and the mating connector does not have a recess. The Hwang reference depicts the lug as being integral with the first connector (20), and the recess as being part of the first substrate. Thus, according to the Office Action's assertion, the first connector would have the recess rather than the guide element; the second connector would not have a recess; and the guide element would be a separate component.

Thus, referring to the mounting pin as the guide element, and referring to either the lug or the mounting hole as the recess, the Hwang reference does not disclose each and every element of Claim 1. Since the Hwang reference does not disclose each and every limitation of Claim 1, it does not anticipate Claim 1 or its dependent Claim 2, 4, and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). It is, therefore, respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 3 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Hwang reference in view of United States Patent No. 6,358,067 to Takase et al. ("the Takase reference"). As described above the Hwang reference fails to disclose each and every element of Claim 1, from which Claims 3 and 6 depend. Similarly, the Takase reference also does not disclose all limitations of Claim 1. For at least these reasons, the Hwang and Takase references do not render dependent Claims 3 and 6 obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). It is, therefore, respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

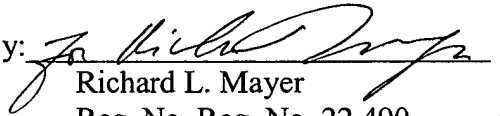
CONCLUSION

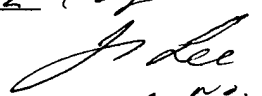
In light of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Prompt reconsideration and allowance of the present application are therefore earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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